

REMARKS

Claims 1, 9, 17 and 24-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9 and 17 are amended. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, in Figs. 2-4, on page 22, line 6 to page 24, line 10, and throughout the specification. No new matter is added.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is requested to consider and initial U.S. Patent No. 5,870,668 (issued to Takano et al.) identified in the September 20, 2006 Information Disclosure Statement. The Examiner is requested to forward a fully initialed Form PTO-1449 with the next Patent Office communication.

II. Rejection of the Claims

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 9, 17 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Staiger, WO 98/39861 (which is equivalent to U.S. Patent No. 6,628,441) in view of Okada et al. (Okada), JP A 2001-147351. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Staiger and Okada fails to disclose or suggest that each radio signal reception board (or transmission signal processing board) comprises thereon a first (or second) photoelectric conversion element that converts the first (or second) electric signals into first (or second) optical signals, and a plurality of reflection portions that each optically reflects the first (or second) optical signals, which are incident thereon and are input from the first (or second) photoelectric conversion element of the corresponding radio signal reception board (or transmission signal processing board), as recited in independent claims 1 and 9, and similarly recited in independent claim 17.

The Office Action acknowledges that Staiger fails to disclose the sheet-shaped optical bus recited in claims 1, 9 and 17. However, the Office Action asserts that Okada discloses the claimed optical bus. Okada discloses a light wave signal transport unit 50 (allegedly

corresponding the claimed optical bus) that is disposed on an optical bus circuit board 10 (see Fig. 1; paragraph [0025]). The optical bus circuit board 10 is connected to plural electronic circuit boards 20 (201-208) via plural electric connectors 30 (301-308) (see Fig. 1; paragraph [0025]). The electric signals input from the electric connectors 30 are converted into optical signals by the electric/optical conversion circuit 40 disposed on the optical bus circuit board 10 (see Fig. 1; paragraph [0025]). That is, the electric/optical conversion circuit 40 in Okada is disposed on the optical bus circuit board 10, not on the electronic circuit boards 20 (201-208). Thus, Okada fails to disclose or suggest that each radio signal reception board (or transmission signal processing board) comprises thereon a first (or second) photoelectric conversion element that converts the first (or second) electric signals into first (or second) optical signals, as recited in independent claims 1 and 9, and similarly recited in independent claim 17. Further, because the electric/optical conversion circuit 40 in Okada is disposed on the optical bus circuit board 10, and not on the electronic circuit boards 20 (201-208), Okada also fails to disclose or suggest that each of the plurality of reflection portions optically reflects the first (or second) optical signals, which are incident thereon and are input from the first (or second) photoelectric conversion element of the corresponding radio signal reception board (or transmission signal processing board), as recited in independent claims 1 and 9, and similarly recited in independent claim 17. Further, the configuration of the transmission system and optical bus 7 disclosed by Staiger (see Fig. 1) also fails to disclose or suggest the above features. Thus, claims 1, 9 and 17 are patentable over the combination of Staiger and Okada.

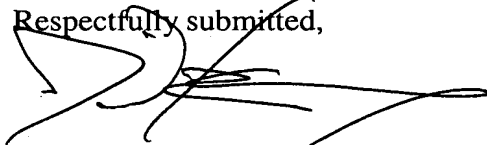
Because claims 24-26 incorporate the features of claims 1, 9 and 17, respectively, these claims also are patentable over the combination of Staiger and Okada. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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